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SIPDIS

SIPDIS

WHA/USOAS, DEPT FOR SUSAN HANKINS, WHA/CAR FOR JACKIE
ROSHOLT

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: SKEPTICISM FROM SURINAME ON YEAR OF ACTION FOR
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AT OAS

REF: SECSTATE 145292

1) Per reftel, post delivered demarche to Chantal Elsenhout, Deputy Head of the International Organizations Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Suriname (GOS) on October 24, 2007.

2) While she had no immediate official response, Elsenhout expressed skepticism as to whether the OAS will be able to come to a decision on a "year of action," and drew comparisons to the current negotiations on the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (DRIP), saying negotiations for a "year of action" could also take years. Elsenhout also said decision making at the OAS usually operates on a consensus basis, and that she sees little chance for consensus on a "year of action." Elsenhout did confirm that Suriname has problems with the specific language of the DRIP - including whether "tribal peoples" should be included. Elsenhout said the GOS will study the issue.

3) Post will report further substantive reaction from the Government of Suriname.

SCHREIBER HUGHES